

Roles of Economics Education in Sustainable National Development

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Abstract

In every nation of the world, Governments tend to concentrate their effort on way of enhancing sustainable national development. This is due to the fact that they are aware of the lantern benefit of sustaining national development. A conservative effort of education is a supplementary advantage that aid sustainable national development. In contemporary time, every discipline/field of human endeavour often explore its role for sustainable national development, but unknown to the researcher, no scholarly article has over time point-out the role of Economics education in sustainable national development, this constitute the gap with the paper sought to fill. The paper clarify the meaning of Economics education; concept of sustainable national development; roles of Economics education in sustainable national development - inculcating managerial skills and competencies on the learners, preparing the learners for self-reliance, increase standard of living/welfare of learners, promoting marketability of the learner for the world of work, and encourage learners to make prior contribution to sustainable national development. It was recommended that, Government should give necessary attention to Economics education by providing adequate fund to some of its programmes for it to achieve some of its goals, which will in the long-run aid sustainable national development.

Keywords: Economics education; National development; Sustainable national development; Economics; Education

Meaning of Economics Education

The term 'Economics Education' is derived from two words 'Economics' and 'Education'. It is expedient to explain and define the meaning of the two terms; their meanings have overtime shifted from a pragmatic to a modern due to globalization and new insight from scholars. According Robbins, 'Economics is a science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses' [1]. Economics is a social science that adopts a behavioural approach to study how human beings use the limited resources in any given society. In same vein, The American Economic Association, view Economics education as the study of scarcity, the study of how people use resources and respond to incentives, or the study of decision-making [2]. Economics is a broad discipline that helps us understand historical trends, interpret today's headlines, and make predictions about the coming years [2]. In same similitude, Investopedia found that it studies how individuals, businesses, governments and nations make choices on allocating resources to satisfy their wants and needs, and tries to determine how these groups should organize and coordinate efforts to achieve maximum output [3]. While education is aggregate of the process, skills, depositions, and belief systems which a learner(s) acquire/achieve for his positive development and meaningful contribution to the society he/she live [4].

According to Akarowhe, education is the transfer of positive skills, values and disposition which are desirable by the society that would assist a learner(s) for self-awareness, self-reorientation, self-actualization and self-reliance [4]. Education is helps an individual to integrate into a given profession through various accomplished skills, competences and depositions received, that will enable him/her to be

self-reliance and contribute to the nation at large. According to the Education can also be seen, as the acquisition of positive values and goals [4]. Akarowhe buttressed his point by opining that that such values and goals are meant for self-actualization of the individual which the social system have keen interest for its attainment. In another development, the Oxford dictionary defined education as the process of receiving or giving instruction, especially at school or university [4,5].

It is pertinent to point-out that 'Economics Education' differs from 'Economics of Education (Education Economics)' the later is the study of economics issues relating to education, including the demand for education, the financing and provision of education, and the comparative efficiency of various educational programs and policies [6]; while the former is concern with imparting desirable knowledge on a learner(s). Economics education is a special branch of economics that utilize educative approaches for the purpose of embedding on the resources within the society. Economics education or Economic education is a field within economics that focuses on two main themes; current state of, and effort to improve, the economics curriculum, materials and pedagogical techniques used to teach economics at all educational levels; and research into the effectiveness of alternative instructions techniques in economics, the level of economic literacy of various groups, and factors that influences the level of economics literacy [6].

In concise meaning of Economics education is thus expressed as:

Economics education can be seen as a process, science and product; as a process economics education involves a time phase of inculcating the needed skills and values on the learners, in other words, it entails the preparation of learners for would-be-economics educator (teachers) and disseminating of valuable economics information on learners in other for them to improve their standard of living by engaging in meaningful venture; as a science, it means that it is a body

of organized knowledge which is subjected to scientific proves/test; and as a product, economics education involves the inculcation of saleable values/skills/disposition on the learners which are desirable by employers of labour and the society at large.

The above meaning put forward, point out a number of essential characteristics of Economics education which are. (a) It involves in inculcating needed skills and values on learners. (b) It adopts a scientific approach in the teaching/learning process. (c) It helps in raising the standard of living of learners. (d) It helps learners to engage in meaningful venture (businesses). (e) It prepares the learners for the world of work. (f) It assist learners in the developmental strive of the society and the nation at large.

Concept of Sustainable National Development

The concept of development is dynamic in nature. In other words, different individual have differ view to what is development at a given time and depending on a particular situation in which is to be used. Development is generically refers to an institutional change which is accompanied by increase in welfare, and fall in cost of living [7]. Akarowhe supplemented his fact by opining that it is a reduction in unemployment, inequality and poverty for a given nation [4]. It can also be seen, as the later stage of growth [7]. In same similitude Yakwal and Yakubu (1999) were of the view that development implies change and describe the process of economic, political and social transformation which countries with this process quite often following a well-ordered sequence and exhibits common characteristics across countries. Development is a term used to appreciate the need for institutional change from the primitive society to a more advance society in the less develop, least develop and even developing countries of the world [8].

National development refers to the ability of a nation to improve the lives of its citizens [9]. Similarly, it can be seen as the ability of a country or countries to improve the social welfare of the people for example, by providing social amenities like quality education, potable water, transportation, infrastructure, medical care, etc. [10]. It is a process of reconstruction and development in various dimensions of a nation and development of individual [11]. Measures of improvement may be material such as an increase in the gross domestic product, or social, such as literacy rates and availability of healthcare [10]. It can be defined as conservative process of ensuring an improvement in all sectors of a national economy so as to better the life of the individuals in a given nation. According to Akarowhe sustainable development is development which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs [7].

The concept of sustainable national development is can be defined as the process of benchmarking present national resources (human and material) with a deliberate aim of not forfeiting the future resources in the process. Sustainable national development takes into consideration all aspect of human life in the process that is political, social, cultural, religious, moral, economic life. Similarly, all sectors of national economy (primary sector, secondary sector, and tertiary sector) are of prior important in the process of ensuring sustainable national development. Sustainable national development can also be view as a development that is geared to avoid depreciation or depiction in national values, resources, needs. The tenet behind sustainable national development is catering for the present needs (human and material) of

a nation without hindering the later or future needs of the nation in the process.

Indicators use to measures sustainable national development:

- Standard of living of individuals.
- Cost of level.
- Level of infrastructural facilities.
- Level of income.
- Level of literacy.
- Level of self-reliance.
- Political stability

Roles of Economics Education in Sustainable National Development

Economics education plays a vital roles in sustainable national development of any nation be it developed, developing or less developed. The following are roles of Economics education in sustainable national development.

Inculcating managerial skills and competencies on the learners

Managerial skills and competencies of organizing, planning, controlling, directing of limited scarce resources is an essential and veritable means of enhancing efficient and effective use of the limited scarce resources. In light of this, managerial skills and competencies are of prior benefit in every sector of a nations' economy, due to the fact that it helps an individual to judiciously utilize material and human resource. When this skills and competencies is imparted on an individual (leaner), he/she will be able to utilize in their field human endeavour which will pave way for increase productivity. In other words, Economics education helps to inculcate managerial skills and competencies on learners that will help them in utilizing such skills for enhancing the productivity in work environment and the society at large. The forgoing will pave way for ensuring sustainable development by an individual (learner).

Preparing the learners for self-reliance

Self-reliance is the extent to which an individual within a given society or nation is able satisfy his/her needs without depending on another person. It is one of the most important indicators use to determine level of national development. In every nation of the world greater percentage of the average population depends on government for employment opportunities. The resultant effect of this is often increase level of unemployment on the aggregate. Economics education seems to provide solution to this besetting problem by preparing an individual for self-reliance. In other words, Economics education prepares an individual to engage in meaningful small and medium scale businesses so as to cater for his/her self without depending on government. In same vein, learners will be able to open-up a business with knowledge gain from economics education during the teaching/learning process, which will enable him to cater for his needs. Supplementary to the forgoing, Ehiedu and Ogbogbro opined that economic enables us to earn a living through employment in academic, economics, social or political institutions [12].

Increase standard of living/welfare of Learners

Standard of living refers to the extent to which an individual is able to maintain itself with the basic needs of life; these needs include food, shelter, protection and clothing. Similarly, Akarowhe was of the view that standard of living is the level of quality of life people in a particular society or country enjoying, which is not only affected by their level of income but the quality and quantity of goods and services made available to them [7]. It is imperative that a keen role of education is to improve or increase the standard of living of the learners. Economics education plays a special role of achieving this role by inculcating vital economic perspective on learners/individual that would assist them in the process of catering for their needs by taking into consideration certain economic principles and laws.

Promoting marketability of the learner for the world of work

The world of work is aimed at providing employment opportunities for the ever growing population of any country [13]. In the world of work, employers of labour are predisposed to employ individuals with the needed market values (skills, competencies, worth among others) that will help to increase productivity on the aggregate in the organizations/establishments they are employed. One important goal of education is preparing the learners for suitable job opportunities before/after the period of teaching and learning. This is achieved when the teaching and learning process is organized bearing in mind the needed values expected of the learners. Economics education equips an individual to contribute meaningfully to a given organization or establishment he/she is working. In other words, Economics education aim an individual for the purpose of been desired by employers of labour. This is due to the needed skill and knowledge transferred to the individual.

Encourage learners to make prior contribution to sustainable national development

Education is expected to integrate an individual to the larger society by imparting disposition, skills and values on him/her that will assist him/her in contributing to the society and the nation at large. In light of this, every learner after a specific period of instruction/learning in an institution of learning is expected to give back to the society and the nation. Economics education helps an individual to contribute his quota for sustaining national development in terms of contributing to the development of the immediate society and the nation at large. In same similitude, Okumana buttressed that the study of Economics helps planners [individuals] to plan for the development of the economy [14]. Similarly, a well-equipped Economics education learner will assist in forecasting unseen economic cycle of recession/depression for government, and proffer remedy to key economic issues facing a nation, which will help aggregate economic performance and increase welfare (standard of living) among member of the society.

Conclusions

The roles of Economics education cannot be underestimated in contemporary society and a nation at large. As observed in the study,

Economics education is the cornerstone for enhancing sustainable national development of any nation of the world. This is due to the fact that it helps to raise the level of manpower development and standard of living among others which are geared toward sustainable national development.

Recommendations

Based on an x-ray on the study, the following recommendations are made.

Government should give necessary attention to Economics education by providing adequate fund to some of its programmes for it to achieve some of its goals, which will in the long-run aid sustainable national development.

Curriculum planners and other stakeholders in the education sector should reposition Economics education by imputing entrepreneurial values. This will help to address some pertinent issues for efficient sustainable development such as reduction in level of mass unemployment among other.

Economics educators' should be properly remunerated. This will assist in incentivizing them to map-out profitable teaching/learning strategies that will help to enrich the learners for sustainable national development.

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